

# Fire Extinguishers

## Fire extinguisher maintenance is important for everyone's safety

**Inspect fire extinguishers** at least once a month (more often in severe environments).

You must ensure that:

- The extinguisher is not blocked by equipment, coats or other objects that could interfere with access in an emergency.
- The pressure is at the recommended level. On extinguishers equipped with a gauge the needle should be in the green zone - not too high and not too low.
- The nozzle or other parts are not hindered or obstructed in any way.
- The pin and tamper seal (if it has one) are intact.
- There are no dents, leaks, rust, or other signs of abuse/wear. Wipe off any corrosive chemicals, oil, gunk etc. that may have deposited on the extinguisher.

Some manufacturers recommend shaking or inverting and patting the bottom of your dry chemical extinguishers once a month to prevent the powder from settling/packing.

Dry chemical fire extinguishers require regular professional maintenance at 6 and 12 year intervals. Consult your owner's manual, extinguisher label or the manufacturer for more information.

If the extinguisher is damaged or needs recharging, replace it immediately!

**IMPORTANT: Recharge all extinguishers immediately after use regardless of how much they were used.**

## Fire Extinguisher Maintenance vs. Inspection

### INSPECTION

An inspection is a physical examination to determine that the device will apparently perform in accordance with its intended function. Inspections should always be conducted when fire extinguishers are initially placed in service and thereafter at approximately 30-day intervals.

### MAINTENANCE

Fire extinguishers should be maintained at regular intervals (annually, 6 years and 12 years), or when problems are identified during an inspection. Maintenance is a "thorough check" of the extinguisher. It is intended to give maximum assurance that an extinguisher will operate effectively and safely. It includes a thorough examination and any necessary repair, recharging, replacement or hydrostatic testing.

## Using a fire extinguisher

The following steps should be followed when responding to incipient stage fire:

- Sound the fire alarm and call the fire department, if appropriate.
- Identify a safe evacuation path before approaching the fire. Do not allow the fire, heat, or smoke to come between you and your evacuation path.
- Select the appropriate type of fire extinguisher.
- Discharge the extinguisher within its effective range using the P.A.S.S. technique (pull, aim, squeeze, and sweep).
- Back away from an extinguished fire in case it flames up again.
- Evacuate immediately if the extinguisher is empty and the fire is not out.
- Evacuate immediately if the fire progresses beyond the incipient stage

<b>Most fire extinguishers operate using the following P.A.S.S. technique</b>	
<p>1. <b>PULL...</b> Pull the pin. This will also break the tamper seal.</p>	
<p>2. <b>AIM...</b> Aim low, pointing the extinguisher nozzle (or its horn or hose) at the base of the fire.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> Do not touch the plastic discharge horn on CO2 extinguishers, it gets very cold and may damage skin.</p>	
<p>3. <b>SQUEEZE...</b> Squeeze the handle to release the extinguishing agent.</p>	
<p>4. <b>SWEEP...</b> Sweep from side to side at the base of the fire until it appears to be out. Watch the area. If the fire re-ignites, repeat steps 2 - 4.</p>	
<p><b>If you have the slightest doubt about your ability to fight a fire....EVACUATE IMMEDIATELY!</b></p>	